

CITIZENS' INDEPENDENT TRANSPORTATION TRUST (CITT)
External Affairs Committee Meeting
Monday, October 18, 2004
Stephen P. Clark Center
111 NW 1st Street
10th Floor CITT Conference Room
1 p.m.

Summary Of Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hon. Luis Morse, Chairman
Miles Moss

Marc Buoniconti

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Bruce Libhaber

OTHERS PRESENT:

Nan Markowitz, Executive Director, OCITT
Nestor Toledo, OCITT
Diego Sandoval, student
Charles Nunoo, FIU
Patrice Rosemond, OCITT
Amir Mirmiran, FIU
Albert Gan, FIU
Judy Seidner, CMO
Lourdes Gomez, MDT
Ruby Hemingway-Adams, MDT

Virginia C. Diaz, OCITT
John Labriola, OCITT
Fang Zhao, FIU
Betty Alexander, DBD
Isabel Padron, MDT
Bill Foster, MDT
Mayra Bustamante, MDT
Jack Furney, OCITT
Lyn Harris, MDT

Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. and Mr. James Reeder received an excused absence. It was announced that Mr. Marc Buoniconti would arrive later in the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Miles Moss moved for the approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morse and carried without dissent.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Moss moved for approval of the September 20, 2004, minutes; seconded by Mr. Morse and carried without dissent.

Citizens' Comments

None

5. Reports/Old Business

a. Pre- and Post-PTP Status Report

Mr. Bill Foster, MDT, Chief of Human Resources, presented MDT's Pre- and Post-PTP Transit Staffing Report, which had been revised at the request of the Committee Chair. The report shows that there was an increase of 802 filled positions as a result of the passage of the surtax.

d. MDT Customer Service Card Update

Ms. Ruby Hemingway-Adams, Assistant Director of Customer Service, MDT, provided revised samples of the proposed customer comment cards to be placed in racks on buses, at Metrorail stations, and Team Metro offices. The committee approved the final design of the 6-by-4-inch, 20-cent postage-prepaid cards. The comment cards will be implemented as a 6-month pilot program to determine customer demand. MDT customer service division would be responsible for responding to patrons' comments. The External Affairs Committee will receive a monthly report on the comments received. Mr. Morse suggested creating Creole and Spanish versions of the comment cards.

The committee then took up item 8B out of order regarding the possibility of using interns to assist in responding to customer comment cards if they create a need for more support. Mr. Bruce Libhaber, Assistant County Attorney, reported that bargaining unit employees currently perform this function. Therefore, anything that would result in taking the place of a new employee or reducing the ability for overtime would have to be agreed to by the union ahead of time.

b. Busway Safety Report

Isabel Padron, MDT, provided an update on Busway crash pattern studies. Short-term recommendations to address safety issues with certain intersections include retiming loop operations. MDT is working with the Public Works Department to determine where loops have to go. Other plans include installing post-mounted signals on US-1 at Busway intersections to alert drivers that there is no turn on red, installing backplates at east- and west-bound approaches, and raising curbs at some intersections to increase the appearance of an intersection. Ms. Padron stated that the project has gone out to bid and work should begin within the next three months. Phase 2 calls for signaling three Busway intersections without signals. This would require FDOT approval. Although signalization standards do not call for the signals, they already exist at other Busway intersections that also don't meet the signalization standards. In the event traffic signals can't be installed, the County would consider four-way stop signs.

8. New Business

a. Federal and State Legislative Update

Lyn Harris, MDT, Governmental Affairs, discussed the status of transportation funding at the federal level. Very little was accomplished this year because Congress and the White House failed to come to an agreement on a transportation funding bill. However, an eight-month extension of the current bill was approved. Congress is expected to meet again in a lame duck session on November 15 to vote on an omnibus bill. The outcome of this November's election will have a significant impact on transportation funding. MDT staff continues lobbying to include items in the appropriations bill and has met with Sen. Graham to recommend that the Earlington Heights-MIC project be considered as part of the North Corridor.

Mr. Moss noted that federal funding for transportation has gone down dramatically, from about \$100 million a year to about \$50 million a year.

Mr. Morse expressed interest in having CITT members accompany MDT staff to assist in lobbying members of Congress for transportation funding. Ms. Harris responded that her staff would be honored to have the members' help.

c. Local Not-for-Profit University Transportation Programs

The Lehman Center for Transportation Research at Florida International University delivered a presentation on their transportation research services. During a slide on transit crime modeling, Mr. Morse asked if such information could be helpful with regard to the recently approved \$89 million contract with Wackenhut to provide transit security. Staff will find out if the MDT has any plans to update an older study on crime patterns at transit stations.

The committee will invite other transportation research institutions to make presentations on the services they can offer to the CITT before making a decision. The CITT may decide to go with an open-ended contract or engage an institution's services on a work order basis.

At 2:30 p.m., Mr. Marc Buoniconti joined the meeting.

Ms. Fang Zhao of the Lehman Center extended an invitation to CITT members to speak at one of the center's future seminars.

5. Reports/Old Business

b. Update CITT Vacancy Outreach Effort

Ms. Virginia Diaz, OCITT, reported that the recent CITT recruitment effort involving print and radio ads yielded 116 applicants. Approximately \$49,000 was spent on the campaign. Staff agreed to provide an analysis of the cost per applicant per media type. Staff confirmed District 13 Commissioner Natacha Seijas rejected her entire slate of four candidates. The Nominating Committee was unable to reach a consensus on year-round recruiting.

c. Monthly Surtax Distribution Report

Ms. Diaz stated that \$24 million has been distributed to municipalities so far this fiscal year. All municipalities are in compliance with certification requirements.

The ordinance establishing the surtax requires that a municipality's share of surtax proceeds be used only to supplement, not replace, its general fund support for transportation at the time the surtax was approved. This is known as the maintenance of effort requirement. Twelve municipalities claim their baseline general fund support for transportation is zero, due to the fact that they had been using special funds for transportation projects rather than the general fund.

The OCITT has drafted letters to the 12 municipalities asking them to identify their revenue streams for transportation expenditures and requesting audit statements.

Committee members requested that a copy of the surtax ordinance be included in their next meeting agenda packet so they can be prepared to discuss needed changes.

A resolution will be drafted recommending changes to the maintenance of effort requirement to include non-general revenue funds in the calculation. It will also call for using average transportation expenditures as the baseline rather than 2001-02 budget,

since some municipalities had atypically high or low transportation expenditures that year. Staff agreed to produce an analysis of how such changes would affect municipalities. Ms. Diaz suggested that members might want to approach the Miami-Dade League of Cities regarding proposed changes to the maintenance of effort requirement. However, this would be strictly at members' discretion.

Mr. Nestor Toledo, OCITT, reported that Coral Gables' trolley system has far exceeded its original ridership expectations of 800 a day and now has 3,000 riders a day. The high use has caused some trolleys to break down. The Christmas shopping season is expected to put an even greater strain on the system. Ms. Diaz raised the possibility of Coral Gables partnering with South Miami on the trolley service to relieve the financial pressure and enable the system to expand as needed.

e. Upcoming Transportation Related Conferences

Staff will provide committee members with a list of transportation-related conferences along with dates and locations.

Announcements – Next External Affairs Committee meeting –

Meeting has been scheduled as follows:
November 17, 2004, 2 p.m.
SPCC, 10th Floor Conference Room

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

*****MINUTES ARE IN SUMMARY FORM***
FOR VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THIS MEETING PLEASE REQUEST
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OFFICE OF THE CITIZENS' INDEPENDENT TRANSPORTATION TRUST
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